Table of Contents

1. If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 1
2. If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 2
3. If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 3
4. If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 4
5. If Spottedleaf Had Survived - Part 1
6. If Spottedleaf Had Survived - Part 2

If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 1

What Happened:
Firestar took a deep breath and said, "The time has come to name ThunderClan's new deputy. I say these words before the spirits of our ancestors, and Graystripe's spirit, wherever it may be, may hear and approve of my choice. Brambleclaw will be the new deputy of ThunderClan." (Sunset, page 257)

What If?:
Firestar took a deep breath and said, "The time has come to name ThunderClan's new deputy. I say these words before the spirits of our ancestors, and Graystripe's spirit, wherever it may be, may hear and approve of my choice. Brackenfur will be the new deputy of ThunderClan."

Sorreltail smiled and nuzzled Brackenfur before he stepped forward to the Highledge. Brackenfur's chest was pounding, he knew that he wasn't the obvious choice. Many cats thought Brambleclaw would be deputy, especially since he went on the journey to the sun-drown place.

"Firestar, are you sure? What about the vision?" Leafpool asked.

Vision? Brackenfur wondered. Was StarClan against him being deputy? If there was, why had Firestar made him deputy?

"The vision can say anything it likes, but I'm not breaking the warrior code for it," Firestar said in determination.

"Vision, Firestar, what is she talking about?" Squirrelflight asked. Brackenfur's fur started to bristle nervously, Squirrelflight was known for having a flaming temper, and a fiery spirit, what if StarClan really was against him?

"It's none of your concern," Firestar said sternly to Squirrelflight.

"No, Firestar, they need to know. They need to know that StarClan has not shown approval to the deputy of your choice," Leafpool said again.

"Then, tell us, Leafpool," Dustpelt said, "Tell us what Firestar won't."

"Last night, I had a vision. I saw the camp, but I couldn't get in it because it was surrounded by brambles, protecting it. The brambles were curved, like claws. Brambleclaw was protecting the camp," Leafpool said, loudly.

Brackenfur started to feel emotions bubbling in his throat. Would Firestar break the warrior code and demote him as deputy?

"Firestar, we can't deny the will of StarClan," Dustpelt said stubbornly.

"And we also can't break the warrior code," Thornclaw said in return, Brackenfur nodded gratefully towards his brother.

"Exactly," Firestar said to Thornclaw, "Leafpool did have this vision, but the warrior code is just as important, and Brambleclaw had never had an apprentice."

"Brackenfur is a loyal and strong warrior, he will make a fine deputy," Mousefur said. Brackenfur blinked his thanks to the elder.

"The will of StarClan is more important than the warrior code," Squirrelflight said fiercely, snarling at Firestar and Brackenfur. Brackenfur's normally calm demeanor was falling apart, and his lips started to curl back into a snarl.

"Really? Brambleclaw's not as experienced as Brackenfur is, he's never had an apprentice, and for the past few moons, who appointed the patrols while Graystripe wasn't here? Brackenfur! Not Brambleclaw," Sorreltail hissed at Squirrelflight.

"Not as experienced? Brackenfur never went on the journey to the sun-drown place!" Squirrelflight snarled back.

The clan quickly dissolved into chaos, cats backing up Brackenfur,

and cats backing up Brambleclaw, Brackenfur found himself arguing with Firestar.

"Firestar, you need to create order in this clan," Brackenfur argued.

"Create order? You can't create order, even if I call the clan together, cats will still be divided, this argument needs to be resolved before order is called upon," Firestar said seriously.

"Then call them to order, we don't have enough time to argue more about who is deputy. You put off assigning a deputy for so long, and to make ThunderClan great again, you need to make up your mind, and fast, before this descends into violence," Brackenfur hissed.

Just as Brackenfur said that, they heard yowls of battle, and he caught glimpses of ginger fur and tortoiseshell and white fur tangled together, claws flashing, and blood splattered in the clearing.

Brackenfur leaped towards them, and grabbed his mate's scruff with his teeth and pulled her back, still hissing and snarling.

"This needs to stop right now! This is not how the deputy is decided, and this is never how any deputy is decided," Brackenfur yowled, as loud as he could, and the clearing turned into silence. His normally calm amber eyes were now burning with fury and indignation, "This choice is Firestar's and not StarClan's."

Brackenfur then looked to Firestar, "Well, Firestar. You have the power to revoke your decision. How will you bring peace?"

Brackenfur didn't know what Firestar would do, the clan was split half and half between himself and Brambleclaw, no matter who he chose, there would be unhappy cats.

"I stand behind my original choice, Brackenfur is the deputy of ThunderClan," Firestar growled, "There will be no more argument."

"Then if that's the choice, I will stand by it as well," Brambleclaw said, stepping forward. Brambleclaw had stayed oddly silent while the clan had descended into chaos, and this was the first time he

stepped out.

Brackenfur nodded his thanks to the dark tabby warrior, and stood up to say, "This is not how I would've liked to become deputy, but I will serve ThunderClan to the best of my ability, and hopefully..." he paused a second to look at Squirrelflight, the ginger she-cat's eyes were still burning in fury, "gain the support of those who think Brambleclaw should be deputy."

"Brackenfur, Brackenfur!" Whitepaw yowled. Brackenfur blinked gratefully at his apprentice, and slowly, more cats started cheering, some more enthusiastic than others. He made mental notes to himself as he watched the warriors that cheered for him reluctantly. Those were the warriors he would have to convince, the only way to fully prove himself as the rightful deputy for ThunderClan.

If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 2

Brambleclaw should not have been as surprised as he was when Brackenfur was announced deputy. He should have seen it coming, Brackenfur was a strong, loyal, warrior, and met the qualifications. Brambleclaw had never had an apprentice, and therefore, unqualified to be deputy.

However, he was surprised, and perhaps, a bit too hopeful when Leafpool announced that she had a vision about Brambleclaw being the right choice as deputy. Was that dangerous? He was getting too ambitious, too much, like Tigerstar. Brambleclaw shivered at the thought, had the nightly trips to train with his father and Hawkfrost made him evil?

No, of course not, he was just doing battle training, training to be a better warrior, he would never be like Tigerstar. Still, he was disappointed when Brackenfur was announced deputy, and Firestar continued to back it, even when half of the clan was on the rocks after hearing Leafpool's declaration of StarClan's support in Brambleclaw.

He went over to Squirrelflight and saw her hissing in exasperation and pacing back and forth, "You know that I'm not qualified to be deputy."

"Because of a stupid rule in the warrior code. You are ten times more qualified than Brackenfur is. Brackenfur never journeyed to the sun-drown place, Brackenfur didn't save all four clans, Brackenfur didn't hear Tallstar proclaim Onestar as the leader of WindClan. Having an apprentice, can't compare to all of that, and you had the support of StarClan, you deserve to be deputy," Squirrelflight said angrily.

"The warrior code is there for a reason, and you shouldn't disrespect it," Brambleclaw said to his mate, starting to feel like a mentor

chastising a wayward apprentice, "And you shouldn't disrespect Brackenfur. He's a loyal and strong warrior, and deserves the position. Now, we should get some sleep. Come on."

He padded into the warrior's den, and felt Squirrelflight padding up behind him, feeling her burning gaze of anger against his back. He settled into the nest he shared with her, and gently licked her cheek before saying, "It's okay. I'm not that upset, and you shouldn't be." He wasn't lying about the upset part, but he was feeling disappointed, and also slightly angry at himself for how much he wanted it.

Brambleclaw woke up in the shadowy forest, just as he had for every night of the past few seasons, he looked to see Tigerstar glaring at him fiercely.

"How could you? You had the support of half the clan, if you had driven the argument, Firestar would have chosen you as deputy, instead of that golden furball," Tigerstar hissed.

"Firestar was only even considering me because of Leafpool's vision, I've never even had an apprentice," Brambleclaw said back.

"Vision," Tigerstar snorted in disdain, "I was disappointed at first in your choice of a mate, but clearly, you now have influence in the medicine cat. Alas, even she wasn't enough."

Brambleclaw's nose flared angrily and snarled, "Leafpool is not a liar, she wasn't making up anything!"

"Making up what?" Hawkfrost asked, padding into the clearing.

"Your brother was in the perfect position for Firestar to revoke his decision to promote Brackenfur as deputy and change it to Brambleclaw. But your brother didn't take it, and now? Guess who's deputy of ThunderClan," Tigerstar said sarcastically and angrily towards Hawkfrost.

"Firestar still has plenty of lives left, and Brackenfur is quite a bit older than you are, so you will probably have your chance," Hawkfrost said reassuringly.

"Oh yes, of course. Obviously he has a second chance, let me tell you, he doesn't. When the golden furball retires or dies, Firestar would also be old, and so will Brambleclaw. There will be new warriors to replace him, and Brambleclaw would no longer be the first choice for deputy," Tigerstar said, "Why do you think I had to act so quickly with Redtail and Lionheart? If I missed the chance, I would never get another one. The same is for you two."

"Then how will we get the chance?" Brambleclaw asked, "Hawkfrost, Leopardstar and Mistyfoot are both starting to show their age, but Brackenfur is still young, and so is Firestar. I can't wait till Firestar loses all his nine lives or when Brackenfur dies or retires. And even so, I can't act quickly, I still need an apprentice, and the next batch won't be ready until another two moons, Brackenfur's not retiring in two moons."

"Well son, ever heard of accidental death?" Tigerstar asked furiously.

"Death? I'm not killing anycat, not Firestar, not Brackenfur," Brambleclaw replied just as angrily.

"Then, force them to retire," Hawkfrost said simply, "I've been trying to do so to Mistyfoot for moons, but she hasn't fallen into any of my traps yet."

Tigerstar looked at Hawkfrost with interest and said, "What have you done?"

"I've tried to lure her to dangerous areas such as the Thunderpath or tall trees, or areas of rushing water. It hasn't worked yet, and she's very suspicious of my motives, so I've stopped for a while," Hawkfrost said.

"Thanks for the advice," Brambleclaw said sarcastically, "But I think I will work my way up, the normal way, I don't want to hurt anycat along my path."

Tigerstar growled, "Well, son, we will see how you feel in two moons, when you have an apprentice, and when you know that had Firestar waited an extra two moons to appoint a deputy, the place

that golden furball stands would have been yours."

If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 3

Brambleclaw's body ached as Tigerstar attacked him again, and he winced as three new scratches appeared on his shoulder.

"You need to be faster! How can you expect to defend your clan if you're so slow!" Tigerstar hissed and reared up to attack him again.

Brambleclaw rolled to the side, barely dodging this attack, it had been three moons since Brackenfur had been made the deputy, and it felt that Tigerstar had made his training even more vigorous since he had received Berrypaw as an apprentice.

Tigerstar aimed a strong blow at Brambleclaw's side, knocking him over, and hissed, "That's enough for you, Hawkfrost, your turn."

Brambleclaw padded to the side, panting as he sat down and started licking his wounds. For the past moon, Tigerstar had been more aggressive, and more demanding of both his sons. Mistyfoot had been injured in a fight against WindClan, and Brambleclaw knew Hawkfrost was using this opportunity to the best of his ability. Brambleclaw had recently received an apprentice, giving him the full qualifications to become the deputy.

Brambleclaw's head snapped to attention as he saw Hawkfrost landing a strong blow on Tigerstar's shoulder, and Tigerstar was knocked over. It was very rare that any cat could beat Tigerstar.

"Yes, Hawkfrost. You're ready," Tigerstar said with satisfaction as he got up, "You know that you can beat any RiverClan cat in a fight, and now, you need to get rid of Mistyfoot. She's half-clan crowfood anyway."

Brambleclaw snarled and said, "Mistyfoot's a strong and loyal warrior."

Hawkfrost snorted and said, "You only think that because she's friends with ThunderClan, but she makes RiverClan weak, and her loyalties will always be divided thanks to her ThunderClan heritage."

Brambleclaw curled his lip but kept his mouth shut. Having just witnessed Hawkfrost defeat Tigerstar, he didn't want to feel Hawkfrost's claws on his own body, and he didn't want to risk angering Tigerstar.

"Enough talk about Mistyfoot. Brambleclaw, Hawkfrost, I expect to see you both tomorrow. You must leave now, the sun is rising," Tigerstar said. He then turned and left, his body quickly being enveloped in darkness.

"Have you created a plan yet Brambleclaw?" Hawkfrost asked him.

"No, I'm too busy training Berrypaw to have time to plot Brackenfur's downfall," Brambleclaw said the last part sarcastically.

"It's lucky you have an apprentice right now. Train him to be loyal to you, and eventually, you will have a group of strong cats who follow every word of yours," Hawkfrost said before fading away.

Brambleclaw opened his eyes and winced as he got up. The blow to his side still hurt, and he would need to sneak into Leafpool's den later to get another poppy seed.

"Brambleclaw, there you are. Can you take Berrypaw to the training hollow? Dustpelt and I were planning to teach Hazelpaw and Mousepaw the half-turn belly rake today, and it would be great for Berrypaw to join them as well," Spiderleg said to Brambleclaw.

Brambleclaw nodded curtly and was about to agree when he heard Brackenfur's voice from Highledge, "Brambleclaw, you lead a hunting patrol to abandoned Twoleg nest. Take Ashfur, Rainwhisker, and Brightheart with you."

"Take Berrypaw training, I need to lead a hunting patrol," Brambleclaw said to Spiderleg. The young warrior nodded, and went to the apprentice's den, presumably to wake up the

apprentices.

Brambleclaw gathered the warriors he needed for the hunting patrol, and at the abandoned Twoleg nest, he scented a mouse. He went into the hunting crouch and caught it quickly before burying it under the earth to pick up later.

He scented a squirrel and was about to leap at it, when Cloudtail suddenly ran into him, panting. "Brambleclaw, you have to help the border patrol. Two badgers came from ShadowClan territory, and the border patrol is having trouble driving them off."

Brambleclaw nodded to Cloudtail, "Head back to camp and get more reinforcements, I will call my hunting patrol to aid."

Cloudtail turned and ran towards the direction of the camp, and Brambleclaw yowled, "My hunting patrol, we need to move to the ShadowClan border and help the border patrol fight off two badgers."

Brightheart, Ashfur, and Rainwhisker ran forward, Rainwhisker asked, "What about the prey?"

"Leave it," Brambleclaw ordered, "It's more important to make sure our clanmates are safe." Without a second word, he ran towards the ShadowClan border, the three ThunderClan warriors following him.

Brambleclaw was shocked as to how badly the fight was going for ThunderClan. Thornclaw and Squirrelflight were fighting one of the badgers, the two young warriors taking turns swiping at the badger's legs and eyes. However, Squirrelflight had a few scratches on her pelt, and Thornclaw was panting, clearly exhausted from the fight.

Brackenfur was fighting the other badger on his own. The golden-brown warrior was fighting for his life, dodging the badger's claws and teeth as he ran around the badger, trying to land a few blows in. Brackenfur had a deep claw mark on his shoulder, and Brambleclaw knew that one mistake from the deputy in the fight would result in almost certain death.

Without hesitation, Brambleclaw leaped forward to help Brackenfur. His paws dug into the earth as he raced forward to leap onto the badger's back. However, he felt an invisible force holding him back. He clawed desperately at the earth, trying to spring forward, but something wouldn't let him.

"What are you thinking?" Tigerstar yowled in his head, "Go help your other clanmates!"

Brackenfur's going to die. Brambleclaw thought, desperately fighting to leap forward and help Brackenfur.

"Exactly," Tigerstar yowled in his head, "So leave him to die and nobly fight to aid your other clanmates."

Brambleclaw watched as Brackenfur dodged more of the badger's attacks, the golden-brown warrior was exhausted, but any hesitation or slowing down would be almost certain death. Ashfur had leaped onto the badger's back, trying to slow down the badger enough to give Brackenfur an opportunity to strike. However, the warrior's efforts were futile.

I have to help, Brambleclaw thought, desperately fighting Tigerstar's force.

"No, you don't," Tigerstar yowled angrily, "This is your chance, take the other badger, no cat will deny your loyalty, and Brackenfur will be dead. This is the best way to go! You won't get another opportunity as golden as this one!"

Brambleclaw looked reluctantly to the other badger that was being dealt with by Brightheart, Thronclaw, Rainwhisker, and Squirrelflight. They didn't need his help. While Thornclaw and Squirrelflight were tired, the appearance of two fresh warriors reinvigorated them and they would be able to chase the badger out.

Brambleclaw looked back to the other badger. Ashfur clung on desperately to the badger's back, trying to deal damage, but the best the gray warrior could do was try not to fall off as the badger ferociously chased Brackenfur. Brackenfur was bleeding from many

areas and had done little to injure the badger. Just as Brambleclaw noticed Brackenfur's movements were slowing, the badger hit him hard in the shoulder. Brackenfur was launched to the other side of the clearing and hit a tree hard. The deputy's teeth clenched in pain as the badger lumbered over, ready to kill.

I'm done listening to you, Brambleclaw thought and he broke free from Tigerstar as he leaped forward to stop the badger. He could hear the yowling of protest from Tigerstar in his head, but he ignored Tigerstar's words as he clawed at the badger's eyes. The badger snarled at the new intruder and turned its attention upon Brambleclaw. Brambleclaw scrambled away from the badger and aimed for the badger's nose while Ashfur finally managed to gain his balance and shred the badger's ears.

All those moons training with Tigerstar and Hawkfrost had heightened Brambleclaw's senses. As adrenaline roared through his body, he used moves that only the Dark Forest would teach. He used the modified version of Badger Defense that Tigerstar had taught him, using his heightened agility and strength to strike the badger with his claws before biting down on its hind leg. The badger growled at him, shaking his back and his hind leg in an attempt to shake off Ashfur and Brambleclaw. While the two warriors were fighting, Brackenfur and aimed for the badger's throat.

The tide had turned against the vicious beast, and it's aggressive eyes now turned to fear as it realized it couldn't fight against these cats. Across the clearing, Brambleclaw heard a yowl of triumph from Rainwhisker, and Brambleclaw assumed they were successful in chasing away the badger. The badger he was fighting realized that its companion was gone, and started flailing desperately. Ashfur lost his grip on the badger's back and tumbled down, Brambleclaw released his grip on the badger's leg, and the badger bolted away towards ShadowClan territory.

Brambleclaw panted as he tried to steady his heartbeat, then he looked around to assess the damage. Ashfur had already gotten up after being launched off the badger's back. There were no visible marks on him, and Brambleclaw could see that the fall had not hurt the gray warrior badly. Brackenfur was by far the most injured.

Brackenfur got up and started walking with a limp, and Brambleclaw assumed that it was from the badger throwing him to the ground. The golden warrior also had a deep gash on his shoulder.

Brambleclaw walked over to his deputy and asked, "Brackenfur, are you okay?"

Panting, Brackenfur replied, "I will be fine once we return to camp. Did Cloudtail go back to camp for reinforcements?"

Brambleclaw nodded, saying, "After finding us, Cloudtail went back to camp. He should be arriving with reinforcements soon to finish marking the border. For now, the patrol needs to go back to camp to recover."

Brackenfur nodded absentmindedly, and Brambleclaw wondered if he should call the patrol back. Brackenfur was the highest-ranked cat here and Brambleclaw was worried that the senior warrior would see it as a challenge to his authority. However, Brackenfur was seriously injured, and in no shape to lead anything. Summoning his courage, Brambleclaw called, "Everyone, we must head back to camp. Help the injured, and as soon as we arrive, go to Leafpool for medical attention."

With that, Brambleclaw allowed Brackenfur to lean on his shoulder as they began the trek back to camp. Brambleclaw still heard the yowls from Tigerstar in the back of his head, goading him to kill Brackenfur now, while he was weak and they were ahead, and chastising him for helping Brackenfur in his time of need. However, Brambleclaw pushed Tigerstar's words to the side.

It's over now, Father, he thought. He wasn't Tigerstar or Hawkfrost. He wouldn't kill and conspire to become the deputy. If he ever became deputy, it would be on his own merit. Did he still want the position? Of course, but he would never go to the extremes of Tigerstar.

That night, Brambleclaw had calm dreams for the first time in moons, and he turned his back on Tigerstar once and for all.

If Brackenfur was Deputy - Part 4

A/N: This takes place many seasons after the events of Parts 1, 2, and 3.

The Dark Forest was defeated and Firestar was dead. *Firestar was dead.* That reality barely sank into Brackenfur's mind. It had been years since he was deputy, and he adapted easily into his position. His initial doubts about Brambleclaw's loyalty proved unfounded as Brambleclaw proved himself again and again to be a worthy ThunderClan warrior. Now, Brackenfur was older, but he was now the leader of ThunderClan.

Brackenfur looked at the camp that had been ravaged by the Dark Forest. They had won, but at what cost? Hollyleaf, Mousefur, Ferncloud, and Firestar were all dead. Sorreltail was badly injured and the medicine cats weren't optimistic. Most of the clan would be sitting vigil that night as their camp lay in tatters. Yet, this was his clan now. The responsibilities of a leader were now his. Strangely, he felt little doubt with this task, and he ascended Highledge for the first time as leader.

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather here beneath the Highledge for a Clan meeting," Brackenfur said, reciting the words that had been said by Firestar, Bluestar, and so many clan leaders before him. He watched as the battered but victorious ThunderClan cats approached the clearing, looking to him as their leader.

"This battle has been a victory for ThunderClan and all the clans at the lake as we have driven out the warriors of the Dark Forest. However, we have lost greatly," Brackenfur said, his tone stoic, "Mousefur, Hollyleaf, Ferncloud, and even our leader, Firestar, was killed during the Great Battle. Tonight will be a vigil for them, as we honor their loss to allow us to continue our way of life."

He paused, allowing himself and the rest of the clan to gather their emotions, "However, our life must continue. I am now the leader of ThunderClan and I will be receiving my nine lives at Moonpool tonight. Before I leave, I would like to appoint the new deputy. I say these words before StarClan, so that the spirits of our warrior ancestors may hear and approve of my choice. The new deputy of ThunderClan is Brambleclaw."

Brackenfur watched as he gauged the reaction of the cats below. He had known that Brambleclaw would be his deputy when he first heard the news of Firestar's death. Brambleclaw was the cat that would've been deputy, and leader now, had Firestar obeyed the omen StarClan sent to Leafpool. In the seasons since he had been deputy, Brambleclaw was a loyal and responsible warrior who was loyal to ThunderClan to the end. Brambleclaw was now a senior warrior, aged, but experienced. He knew how to lead, and Brackenfur could think of no better warrior than Brambleclaw to have at his side.

The clan erupted in cheers as Brambleclaw walked forward, looking stunned before saying, "Brackenfur, I thank you for this honor. Cats of ThunderClan, I promise by StarClan that I will serve the clan to the best of my ability until my dying breath. Thank you."

Brackenfur nodded pridefully at Brambleclaw's small speech. As he leaped off Highledge and walked towards the medicine cat den, he knew that he had made the right choice in his deputy. ThunderClan had a long road of rebuilding ahead of it, and he knew that as Brackenstar, he could do it with Brambleclaw by his side.

A/N: This is the last part of 'If Brackenfur was Deputy', I have a few parts written out for 'If Spottedleaf had Survived' and 'If Feathertail had Survived', but I'm unsure which one to publish first. I hope you enjoyed my interpretation of what would've happened, and leave comments with your thoughts.

If Spottedleaf Had Survived - Part 1

What Happened:

Firepaw nosed his way forward and saw Tigerclaw standing over a motionless bundle of dappled fur.
Spottedleaf!
Firepaw stared in disbelief at her lifeless body. (Into the Wild)

What If:

Spottedleaf coughed as her eyes opened, and she saw Yellowfang working through her supplies. Yellowfang turned around and grunted, "You're awake, finally. Everyone else was convinced that you died."

Spottedleaf turned and instantly, the memories flooded back, Clawface, the kits. He had struck a blow to her throat, but as Spottedleaf looked down, her throat was unharmed, but there was instead, a large, ugly-looking blow to her chest that had been plastered with cobwebs and marigold.

"Stop moving, you have to stay still if you want to heal. You should know that you're a medicine cat after all," Yellowfang grumbled, and she continued sorting herbs.

Spottedleaf got back down, but raised her head, despite the screaming of pain from her chest, "Are the kits okay?"

"The kits are fine. Fireheart and Graystripe managed to save them from Brokenstar with the help of Whitestorm and his patrol as well as some ShadowClan elders I directed them to. Ravenpaw died in their attack, Brokenstar and his followers have been kicked out, Nightstar is the new leader of ShadowClan," Yellowfang said.

Spottedleaf rested her head again, had Firepaw and Graypaw been

made warriors while she was knocked out? They must have, although they did have a very short apprenticeship. Bluestar had given them both beautiful names, especially Fireheart. It matches his personality perfectly.

Had anyone visited her while she was unconscious? Had Fireheart? Spottedleaf found herself wondering, and hoping, that he cared enough to come see her. Just as her mind drifted back to Fireheart and his handsome ginger pelt, Fireheart walked into the medicine cat den.

Spottedleaf's heart leaped at the sight of him, and she wanted to greet him, but as soon as she lifted her head, her chest screamed in agony, and she stayed resting in her nest, although her eyes looked at Fireheart longingly.

"Spottedleaf, you're finally awake," Fireheart said, smiling at the medicine cat, and Spottedleaf felt her heart melt at his warm gaze.

"Don't talk to her for too long, she still needs more rest if the chest wound will ever heal, too much movement is going to hinder that," Yellowfang said, "I'm going out to collect some more marigold." With that, she left the medicine cat den, and Spottedleaf and Fireheart were left alone.

Fireheart walked up to her, and for a moment, Spottedleaf thought he looked undetermined and nervous, before saying, "How are you doing?"

The next sentence she said would violate one of the most important rules in the medicine cat code, but she couldn't help it, not when the handsome tom was standing in front of her, staring at her with his deep green eyes. "Better now that you are here," Spottedleaf purred, the very act of it hurting her chest.

Fireheart looked shocked for a moment before nuzzling her gently, and Spottedleaf was shocked as well, she had never been affectionate like this with any tom before, aside from her mentor. However, she felt warmer, and even though it hurt, she nuzzled him back.

When Fireheart pulled away, no words were spoken for a few moments, but their eyes met, Spottedleaf's amber ones and Fireheart's green ones, both with a look of longing and wanting before Spottedleaf broke the gaze.

What was she thinking? She was a medicine cat, albeit she wasn't doing her duty right now, but once she healed, she would be back to being a medicine cat, and she couldn't take a mate. However, she wanted to be pressed against Fireheart, to feel him breathing next to her, their tails entwined together, knowing they would always love each other, and she knew he wanted that as well.

When she looked back, Fireheart was still there, this time looking a little sad and he said, "I'm glad you're alive."

"I am too," she replied, and then she said, "Thank you for visiting me Fireheart, it really means a lot."

Fireheart nodded before leaving the medicine cat den, and Spottedleaf was left thinking, what did she want more?

Ever since she was a kit, she had wanted to be a medicine cat, she loved mixing herbs, and helping other cats, she was never good at hunting or fighting. However, did she love Fireheart more, or being a medicine cat? Medicine cat, but could that change? If she and Fireheart spent more time together, could she grow to love him more than her duties? Did she want to take that chance?

A/N: I've had this part prepared for a long time to publish once I finished Brackenfur. The second part is also already written, so that will be published soon after. As always, tell me your thoughts.

If Spottedleaf Had Survived - Part 2

Spottedleaf hated herself, it had been three moons since she was attacked by Clawface. She had started seeing Fireheart, in her den at night. They would talk to each other, and spend time together because it was something they couldn't do in the day. Fireheart had his duties, and she had hers, but it was when she was with Fireheart that she felt most complete.

Why was she like this? She loved her duties, and she could not give them up for anyone, not even Fireheart, then why had she agreed to see him? They should have never started seeing each other in the first place, that way, they both would have never fallen in love, and she wouldn't have to break his heart or her own.

Tonight was the night, tonight she would tell Fireheart that she couldn't be with him. Even though they both wanted their forbidden romance to continue, she couldn't keep this going. She had to follow her call as a medicine cat, and he had to follow his as a warrior.

That night, however, when she was next to Fireheart, she couldn't do it. She couldn't break his heart. As he murmured soft words of love to her, she felt herself relax, her mind stop, as she found herself lost again in her love for him.

Afterwards, she conceived a fantasy, a fantasy where Yellowfang could take over full duties, and she could retire as medicine cat to be a warrior and raise Fireheart's kits. However, as the fantasy went further, she realized the flaws. She would never make a good warrior, she knew that enough from the moon of warrior training under Thrushpelt. She would only jeopardize her clan's security as a warrior. She would never catch enough prey, and she wouldn't be able to support her clanmates in battle.

The combination of reality and her love for her duties and her clan

was enough, she finally spoke the truth.

It was one of those nights, a moon after the Battle of Sunningrocks. Fireheart and Spottedleaf were nuzzling in the corner of the medicine cat den when Spottedleaf finally said, "Fireheart, we can't do this, we can't be together."

"I understand, Spottedleaf. I knew this couldn't last forever, but we need to make the choice, do we want to become mates? If we do, you would have to retire, or we would have to become rogues, but if we don't, then life can continue as normal," Fireheart said carefully. From his tone, Spottedleaf already knew his choice. It was exactly as she expected, but that didn't make it hurt less.

"I'm sorry, Fireheart. I love you, I really do, but I can't give up my duties as a medicine cat," Spottedleaf said slowly.

"I know, I knew that from the beginning. I love you as well, but I can't give up my position in the clan either," Fireheart said longingly.

"I love you, Fireheart, and maybe one day, we will walk in the stars together, as mates," Spottedleaf said sadly.

"I love you too, Spottedleaf," Fireheart said, before walking away back into the warrior's den. Spottedleaf could only watch longingly. She made a difficult choice, but the right one.

The next morning, Spottedleaf spotted Fireheart talking to Whitestorm before leaving the camp with Sandpaw. Sandpaw walked with an extra skip in her step as she and Fireheart left the camp. Spottedleaf couldn't bear to watch anymore and turned back to her den.

For the rest of the day, Spottedleaf could only think about Fireheart and Sandpaw. Sandpaw was the best hunter in the clan, but she was rude to Fireheart all throughout his apprenticeship and his early days as a warrior. In fact, she had only started warming up to him after the Battle at Sunningrocks. Spottedleaf felt a strange twinge in her heart, would Fireheart grow to love Sandpaw?

Spottedleaf shoved the thought away, if he did love Sandpaw, then there was nothing she could do about it. Last night, they both made the choice to obey the code and part ways. However, at sundown, when Fireheart came back with Sandpaw, she couldn't help but notice the smile on both of their faces.

She turned away from Fireheart, only to find herself face to face with Yellowfang. After Spottedleaf had healed, Bluestar decided to make Yellowfang the second medicine cat of ThunderClan in gratitude for saving Spottedleaf and giving crucial information in helping to save Frostfur's kits.

"We need to talk," Yellowfang said seriously.

Spottedleaf gulped as she followed Yellowfang out of the camp, suddenly feeling like an apprentice again about to be reprimanded by her mentor.

When they were far away from the camp, Yellowfang started speaking, "I know what you have been doing with Fireheart."

"It's not what you think," Spottedleaf said quickly, trying to defend herself.

"I'm in the medicine cat den as well, and I'm not as deep of a sleeper as you think I am," Yellowfang said sternly. her voice lightened a bit as she continued, "However, you made the right choice. You could never be a full warrior, and you are destined to be a medicine cat. If you had continued what you were doing each night, you would eventually be pregnant with Fireheart's kits, and that would never end well."

"How do you know?" Spottedleaf said defensively, "If I did get pregnant, I could give the kits to a ThunderClan queen and claim they were abandoned by a rogue."

"And you would live forever right next to them, loving them like a mother, but never being able to show the true affections you feel," Yellowfang said bitterly, "I would know."

Spottedleaf stopped walking and turned to look at the old medicine

cat. Her jaw dropped before saying, "What? Have you had kits? Did you have a mate?"

"I became a warrior first, and as a warrior, I developed affections for Raggedpelt, or as you may know him, Raggedstar," Yellowfang said, looking down, lost in her memories.

"Everything could have been perfect. We loved each other, and he said that when he became the leader, I would be his deputy. Alas, my true calling was to be a medicine cat. StarClan blessed me with a gift that could only be used as a medicine cat and would hinder me as a warrior. Then, I had to change paths. I should have turned my back to Raggedpelt then, but I didn't, and throughout my medicine cat apprenticeship, we met in secret. I was faced with reality when I became a full medicine cat and turned my back on him then, but it was already too late. I was pregnant with his kits, and I gave birth to them," Yellowfang said, her tone growing more bitter the longer she talked.

"It was a long and painful birth, I had two she-kits and a tom. One she-kit was stillborn, and the other died, barely minutes after it was born. The tom was the only survivor, but that tom caused more destruction to the clans than he caused to my heart. Brokenkit later killed his father and nearly destroyed all of the clans," Yellowfang said, her voice quivering as she spoke.

Spottedleaf stared, jaw-dropped, at the old gray she-cat. Was this how StarClan punished cats who broke the code? Yellowfang was right, it's not worth it. One affair nearly destroyed the whole forest. What would've happened if she and Fireheart had continued their affair? Spottedleaf shuddered at the thought of what Yellowfang went through.

"I saw the look you were giving Sandpaw, it was the same look I gave Foxheart so many seasons ago," Yellowfang said solemnly.

"Foxheart?" Spottedleaf questioned. Did the ShadowClan leader really hate this cat? Or was this a cruel nickname Yellowfang came up with?

"Foxheart was a she-cat who loved Raggedpelt. He returned those

feelings, but not as strong as he loved me," Yellowfang said, "Foxheart was never the most pleasant, but she died, and Brokentail was indirectly involved."

Spottedleaf turned away before Yellowfang could continue, "I understand, Yellowfang. Fireheart and I were never meant to be together anyway, if he can be happy with Sandpaw, then I guess I should be happy for him as well."